

Message Text

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MBFR CAPITALS 251

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FROM US REP MBFR

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PARM

SUBJECT: MBFR: AD HOC GROUP MEETING MARCH 15 HIGHLIGHTS

AD HOC GROUP DISCUSSION MORNING OF MARCH 15 FOCUSED ON EAST/ WEST
CONTACTS AT GREEK RECEPTION MARCH 14 AND ON DISCUSSIONS OF ALLIED
TACTICS DURING US/ NETHERLANDS SESSION WITH USSR AND HUNGARIAN
REPS SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 16.

1. ALLIED REPS REPORTED THAT, IN CONVERSATIONS DURING GREEK
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RECEPTION EVENING OF MARCH 14, EASTERN DELEGATES HAD GENERALLY EXPRESSED SATISFACTION AND SOME OPTIMISM WITH CURRENT DISCUSSIONS ON THE HUNGARIAN PARTICIPATION QUESTION BEING CONDUCTED BETWEEN US AND NETHERLANDS REPS AND USSR AND HUNGARIAN REPS. MAJOR NEW THEME EMERGING FROM CONTACTS AT RECEPTION WAS QUESTION OF POSSIBLE INCLUSION OF FRANCE IN MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, A SUBJECT RARELY MENTIONED HITHERTO BY EASTERN DELEGATIONS. SEVERAL EASTERN DELEGATION MEMBERS RAISED SUBJECT OF FRANCE AND MBFR, WITH MOST SPECIFIC COMMENT MADE BY HUNGARIAN REP USTER TO BELGIAN REP TO THE EFFECT THAT, IN THE SEARCH FOR A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF HUNGARIAN PARTICIPATION, ALL PARTIES SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO CLOSE THE DOOR FOR EVENTUAL FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN MBFR. SEVERAL ALLIED REPS COMMENTED THAT EAST APPEARED TO BE BUILDING A STRONGER BARGAINING POSITION FOR THE FUTURE THROUGH EMPHASIS ON FRANCE, AND THE ITALIAN REP SAID THAT IT WAS BECOMING CLEAR THAT IN THE SOVIET VIEW THE COUNTERPART FOR HUNGARY WAS MORE THAN ITALY ALONE, AND PRESUMABLY INCLUDED FRANCE. IN CONSEQUENCE, THE ITALIAN REP SAID, IT WOULD BE FRUITLESS TO SEEK A SOLUTION TO THE HUNGARIAN PROBLEM WHICH WOULD PAIR OFF HUNGARY WITH ITALY SINCE THIS WOULD NOT BE ENOUGH TO SATISFY THE SOVIETS.

2. ANOTHER THEME THAT EMERGED DURING RECEPTION WAS EMPHASIS BY HUNGARIAN AND GDR REPS ON POTENTIAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF MBFR, AND THE VIEW THAT SUCH ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS UNDERLAY EASTERN INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT.

3. ON THE HUNGARIAN ISSUE, APART FROM SOME STATEMENTS OF OPTIMISM THAT THE ISSUE SEEMED TO BE MOVING TOWARD RESOLUTION, SOVIET REPS CONTINUED TO MAINTAIN THAT HUNGARY AND ITALY MUST BE LINKED. THIS VIEW WAS GIVEN A NUANCED INTERPRETATION BY THE CZECH AND GDR REPS WHO SUGGESTED TO ALLIED REPS THAT A SPECIAL CATEGORY OF PARTICIPANTS MIGHT BE CREATED TO ENCOMPASS THE TWO "UNRESOLVED" PARTICIPANTS, HUNGARY AND ITALY.

4. BEFORE THE GROUP TURNED TO A DISCUSSION OF TACTICS FOR THE MARCH 16 SESSION WITH THE EAST ON HUNGARY, THE UK REP MADE A STATEMENT WHICH HE SAID REPRESENTED BOTH HIS PERSONAL VIEW AND LONDON'S THINKING. HE URGED THAT IN FORTHCOMING DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE ALLIED EMISSARIES AND THE EAST ON THE HUNGARIAN ISSUE ALLIED UNITY MUST BE MAINTAINED, CAUTION MUST BE MIXED WITH FLEXIBILITY IN PROBING, AND NO IMPRESSION OF HASTE SHOULD BE CONVEYED. HE SAID THAT THE DISCUSSIONS ON HUNGARY THAT HAD BEGUN ON MARCH 13

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ARE LIKELY TO ENDURE A LONG TIME AND INDEED HOPEFULLY WOULD, SINCE IT WAS ONLY THROUGH STRONG AND PATIENT BARGAINING THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD BE BROUGHT IN THE DIRECTION OF ALLIED VIEWS. IN THE SESSIONS TO COME, HE CONTINUED, ALLIED STEPS SHOULD BE CAREFULLY PLANNED AND THE ALLIED EMISSARIES SHOULD STICK CLOSELY TO THE ALLIED POSITION BASED ON THE US PAPER. THE FRG REP AGREED WITH THE UK VIEWS, EMPHASIZING THAT THE ALLIED SPOKESMAN SHOULD HUE CLOSELY TO THE AGREED ALLIED POSITION SINCE TO ALTER IT IN THE INTERESTS OF PROBING WOULD PERMIT THE SOVIETS TO MAKE COUNTERPROPOSALS AND PROBE FOR DISUNITY AMONG ALLIES IN A MANNER WHICH WOULD DAMAGE WESTERN INTERESTS. THE NORWEGIAN REP THEN STATED THAT, WHILE HE STRONGLY ENDORSED THE UK REP'S VIEW ON ALLIED UNITY, HE DID NOT FEEL THAT TIME WAS ON THE ALLIED SIDE IN THE PRESENT SESSIONS, AND THOUGHT THAT A DEGREE OF HASTE AND INDEED OF STATED IMPATIENCE TO THE SOVIETS WAS NOT A BAD IDEA. THE US REP, RESPONDING TO THE FRG POINT THAT ALLIED EMISSARIES SHOULD BE CAUTIOUS IN FLEXIBLE PROBING SO AS TO LIMIT POSSIBLE EASTERN OPENINGS, NOTED THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS WITH RESPECT TO THEIR HEADQUARTERS WHICH LIMIT THEIR ABILITY TO OFFER FLEXIBLE FORMULATIONS LOOKING TOWARD A POSSIBLE COMPROMISE

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THE QUESTION OF ASSURANCES DESIGNED TO PROTECT ALLIED SECURITY INTERESTS THAT MIGHT ACCOMPANY A PARTICIPATION FORMULA LEAVING HUNGARY IN ABEYANCE. THE GROUP AGREED TO THESE SUGGESTIONS.

6. THE UK REP SUGGESTED THAT THE ALLIES COULD ALSO TRY OUT ON THE EAST A VARIATION ON THE KVITSINSKIY IDEA OF MARCH 14, I. E., A GENERAL LISTING OF 19 PARTICIPANTS, PLUS A CATEGORY INCLUDING 11 PARTICIPANTS WHOSE QUALITIES WOULD BE DEFINED BUT WHO WOULD NOT BE LISTED BY COUNTRY. THE VARIATION HE PROPOSED WAS A LIST OF ALL 19, PLUS A LIST OF 7 INDIRECT PARTICIPANTS. THE UK REP EXPLAINED THAT HIS FORMULA WOULD AVOID LISTING THE DIRECT PARTICIPANTS, AND THUS WOULD NOT INCLUDE HUNGARY AMONG THEM, AND THUS WOULD BE MORE POSITIVE THAN THE KVITSINSKIY FORMULA WHICH SERVED TO EXCLUDE HUNGARY FROM THE LIST OF DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. THE FRG, ITALY, AND BELGIUM EXPRESSED ENDORSEMENT FOR THE UK TACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. THE US REP SAID THAT HE COULD AGREE THAT THE IDEA BE MENTIONED TO THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SOVIETS BUT ONLY IF THEY TOOK THE INITIATIVE TO RAISE THE KVITSINSKIY IDEA AGAIN, ALTHOUGH HE WAS SKEPTICAL THAT THE EAST WOULD ACCEPT THE BRITISH VARIATION AND THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE CONSIDERED TO GO BEYOND THE AGREED MANDATE.

7. PROPOSED SOVIET DEFINITION OF DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. THE NETHERLANDS REP RAISED THE SUBJECT OF THE DEFINITION OF DIRECT PARTICIPANTS PROPOSED MARCH 14 BY THE SOVIETS, I. E., THAT THEY WOULD BE DEFINED AS " UNDISPUTED PARTICIPANTS IN POTENTIAL FUTURE AGREEMENTS". HE SAID THAT THE ALLIES SHOULD BE CAREFUL WITH THIS IDEA AND SHOULD INDICATE THAT THEY COULD AGREE TO IT ONLY IF THERE WERE A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION TO THE HUNGARIAN QUESTION OTHERWISE, HE SAID, THE ALLIES WOULD BE GIVING SOMETHING AWAY TO THE EAST IN RETURN FOR NOTHING AND WOULD ALSO BE INCURRING THE PROBLEM OF APPARENT COMMITMENT TO REDUCTIONS WHICH WAS IMPLICIT IN THE SOVIET DEFINITION. HE ADDED THAT, FOR THE PRESENT, THE ALLIES SHOULD STICK TO THEIR OBJECTIVE RATIONALE FOR DIRECT PARTICIPATION, I. E., FORCES OR TERRITORY IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

8. THE FRG AND US REPS ENDORSED THE SENSE OF CAUTION IN THE REMARKS OF THE NETHERLANDS REP, BUT SAID THAT THE PROBLEM WITH THE EASTERN DEFINITION WAS IN FACT MORE COMPLICATED AND THE ALLIES NEEDED TO SEE NOT ONLY WHAT SOLUTION TO THE HUNGARIAN PARTICIPATION PROBLEM MIGHT EMERGE BUT ALSO WHETHER THE EAST WOULD BE WILLING TO AGREE TO ALLIED VIEWS ON A DESCRIPTION OR TITLE FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS, I. E., ACCEPT THE NOTION THAT MBFR INVOLVED MORE THAN REDUCTIONS ALONE. OTHERWISE, THE US REP EXPLAINED, THE SOVIET DEFINITION OF DIRECT PARTICIPATION MIGHT BE INTERPRETED AS SOME SORT OF COMMITMENT FOR ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO TAKE PART IN REDUCTIONS. THERE WAS NO POINT IN SOLVING THE PARTICIPATION ISSUE

BY TRADING IT AGAINST A NEW BLOCKAGE OVER THE AGENDA OR DESCRIPTION OF THE TALKS IF THE SOVIETS INSISTED ON A TITLE LIMITED TO THE CONCEPT OF REDUCTIONS ALONG. HE ADDED THAT, WITH THESE CAUTIONS, HE ENDORSED THE NETHERLANDS VIEW THAT THE ALLIES COULD CONSIDER THE SOVIET DEFINITION, BUT ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF A BROADER EAST/ WEST AGREEMENT ON THE PARTICIPATION ISSUE AND ON THE DESCRIPTION OF TALKS. THE GROUP AGREED THAT, IN THE PRESENT STATE OF DISCUSSIONS WITH THE EAST, THE ALLIED EMISSARIES SHOULD NOT ACCEPT THE SOVIET DEFINITION OF DIRECT PARTICIPANTS BUT SHOULD REITERATE THE ALLIED CRITERIA FOR DIRECT PARTICIPATION BASED ON FORCES OR TERRITORY IN CENTRAL EUROPE. HUMES

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